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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: ZARQAWI'S DEATH

1. Summary: An unsigned editorial in Abu Dhabi-based Arabic daily "Al-Ittihad" strongly criticizes Arab Muslims for not condemning the Muslim Brotherhood for presenting their condolences on Zarqawi's death. A columnist in "Al-Bayan" wonders how the official reaction to Zarqawi's death is happiness and relief and lays the blame for violence in Iraq on Bush's policies. "Al-Bayan" was skeptical of President Bush's talks on democracy while keeping silent on the massacres caused by Israeli forces. An unsigned editorial in English daily "Gulf News" renews the call to close Guantanamo with the death of three prisoners. End Summary.

2. A front-page unsigned 6/11 editorial in Abu Dhabi-based semi-official Arabic daily "Al-Ittihad" (circulation 65,000) headlines: "Brotherhood of Opportunists" and opines:

"As soon as the world got rid of the terrorist slaughter al Zarqawi, after he got from God what he deserved by facing a just end (an end to anyone who fights God and his messenger and seeks to corrupt the world), representatives from the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, gave more evidence that their group's suspicious relation with Al Zarqawi and other terrorists and criminals is a parent-child relationship. Those brothers went to present their condolences to the killer, as if the thousand widows, orphans and innocent souls... whose lives were taken away by Zarqawi, do not mean anything... This is not surprising. What is surprising, is the Arab Islamic silence against this brotherhood that proved that they were partners in causing the bloodbath in Iraq... When will killers be called killers and terrorists as terrorists so as to deal with them on this basis?"

3. Under headline "Resistance and occupation", a columnist, Ahmed Omarabi, wrote in a 6/12 op-ed in Dubai-based Arabic daily "Al-Bayan," (circulation 90,000):

"... Amid the hysterical happiness spreading throughout Washington, Tel Aviv and other Western countries on the news of Al Zarqawi's assassination, an American citizen was shocked... Michael Burg had a son whose head was chopped off by Al Zarqawi's group. Nevertheless, the father was able to overcome his self sorrow by saying that he did not feel relieved on Zarqawi's death and laid the fault of his son's death on George Bush... In short, the United States and Israel can continue to assassinate symbols of national resistance in Iraq and Palestine, but the resistance will never stop as long as these people are under occupation... The "Mae Lai" massacre and the likes of it in Vietnam did not diminish the resistance of the Vietnamese people which ultimately led to the defeat of the United States forces in the mid-seventies of the last century."

4. Under headline "Bush, democracy and the Israeli massacres", Dubai-based Arabic daily "Al-Bayan," (circulation 90,000) wrote in a 6/12 editorial:

"In his weekly talk, President Bush lauded the achievement of his forces in Iraq, emphasizing their success in settling Abu Musab Al Zarqawi and said that democracy has made great victory in the heart of the Middle East. His democratic indication coincided with the massacre caused by the Israeli forces taking away the souls of more than ten Palestinian civilians, including a baby... How can Bush expect even a minimal positive reaction to his democracy and determination to help spread it in the region while not releasing a single word of condemnation, even an empty one, against Israel? ...Instead of rewarding the Palestinians for practicing democracy... the Americans rushed to place them under siege through unfair sanctions... This happened at a time when Bush was using every occasion to focus on the policies of his administration and its obligation to spread democracy!"

5. A UAE columnist, Abdulla Rasheed, wrote in a 6/12 op-ed in Abu Dhabi-based semi-official Arabic daily "Al-Ittihad" (circulation 65,000) which opined:

"We wish those who call themselves the "Muslim Brotherhood" and the Jordanian "Labor Islamic Group", who presented their condolences to Al Zarqawi, would visit Iraq and present their condolences to the hundreds of innocent children, women, youth

and elderly people who were killed over the years in Iraq by the corrupter Al Zargawi."

16. An unsigned editorial in Dubai based English daily "Gulf News" on 6/12 under the headline "A stain America must remove" (circulation 95,000):

"We do not know how three inmates of Guantanamo were able to prepare the bed sheets and commit suicide without drawing the attention of guards. But we do know that more than four years after the American detention camp at Guantanamo Bay opened, the calls for it to close will grow louder and rightly so. The International Committee of the Red Cross, the UN Secretary General and former US President Jimmy Carter have already called for the detention facility to be shut down. Guantanamo does nothing but harm America's international image and saps its moral authority. The Statue of Liberty stands as a beacon to the world, Guantanamo acts as an insult to all that is best in America; constitutional rule, its innate sense of human rights, the dignity of man. It stands as a glaring contradiction to values that are cherished by Americans. By its own calculations the Pentagon believes about 10 per cent of the inmates are hardened terrorists and about 50 per cent did not commit any hostile act against the US or its allies. The majority of detainees were not captured by US forces but by Afghan or Pakistani groups when America was offering bounties of \$5,000 for any prisoner accused of terrorism. The so-called war on terror will never be won by employing Guantanamo methods. The American legal system is strong enough to defeat terror, to suggest otherwise is a slight to those bereaved by Timothy McVeigh's Oklahoma bomb. The damage done to America's image by events at Guantanamo has simply not been worth the international opprobrium. In a conflict against terrorism where goodwill is vital, Guantanamo is a self-inflicted festering wound that does nothing but give comfort to America's enemies. It must be shut down and shut down now."

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